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Improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat

Report of the Secretary-General

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* E/CN.6/2000/1.

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Abbreviations

DDA	Department for Disarmament Affairs
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DM	Department of Management
DM/OCSS	Department of Management/Office of Central Support Services
DM/OHRM	Department of Management/Office of Human Resources Management
DM/OPPBA	Department of Management/Office of Programme Planning Budget and Accounts
DGAACS	Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services
DPA	Department of Political Affairs
DPI	Department of Public Information
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DPKO/FALD*	Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Field Administration and Logistics Division
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ECLAC	Economic and Social Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
INTERORG	Interorganizational bodies Joint Inspection Unit Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions International Computing Centre Information Systems Coordination Committee
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODCCP	Office of Drug Control and Crime Prevention
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Services
OLA	Office of Legal Affairs
OSG	Office of the Secretary-General
OSRGCAC	Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict

* All staff with appointments of one year or more assigned to peacekeeping and other special missions.

REGCOM	Regional Commissions Liaison Office
UNCC	United Nations Compensation Commission
UNCHS	United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFIP	United Nations Fund for International Partnerships
UNJSPF	United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund
UNOG	United Nations Office at Geneva
UNOIP	United Nations Office of the Iraq Programme
UNON	United Nations Office at Nairobi
UNOV	United Nations Office at Vienna
UNSCOM	United Nations Special Commission established by the Security Council pursuant to Security Council resolution 687 (1991)

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 54/139 of 17 December 1999, on the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the resolution by, *inter alia*, providing statistics on the number and percentage of women in all organizational units and at all levels throughout the United Nations system, to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-fourth session. In the same resolution, the General Assembly reaffirmed the urgent goal of achieving 50/50 gender distribution in all categories of posts within the United Nations system, especially at the D-1 level and above, with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in conformity with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, and also taking into account the continuing lack of representation or under-representation of women from certain countries, in particular developing countries and countries with economies in transition. The General Assembly expressed its regret that the goal of gender balance would not be met by the year 2000, and urged the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts to realize significant progress towards the goal by the end of 2000.

2. The Assembly welcomed the ongoing personal commitment of the Secretary-General to meeting the goal of gender equality and his assurance that gender balance will be given the highest priority in his continuing efforts to bring about a new management culture in the Organization, which will include full implementation of the special measures for the achievement of gender equality.[1] The Assembly also welcomed the inclusion of the objective of improving gender balance in action plans on human resource management for individual departments and offices and encouraged cooperation between the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Office of Human Resources Management in the further elaboration and monitoring of those plans, which will include concrete strategies and specific targets for improving women's representation in each department and office. The Assembly further requested the Secretary-General to monitor closely the progress made by departments and offices in meeting the goal of gender balance, and to ensure that the appointment and promotion of suitably qualified women will not be less than 50 per cent until the goal of 50/50 gender distribution is met.

3. In the same resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to develop innovative recruitment strategies to identify and attract suitably qualified women candidates, particularly in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, in other Member States that are unrepresented or under-represented in the Secretariat and in occupations in which women are under-represented. The Assembly strongly encouraged Member States to support the efforts of the United Nations and the specialized agencies to achieve the goal of 50/50 gender distribution, especially at the D-1 level and above, by identifying and regularly submitting more women candidates for appointment, including appointment in areas in which women are under-represented, such as peacekeeping, peace-building and other non-traditional areas, and by proposing national recruitment sources that will assist the organizations of the United Nations system in identifying suitable women candidates.

4. The General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue his work to create within existing resources a gender-sensitive work environment supportive of the needs of his staff, both women and men, through, *inter alia*, the development of policies for flexible working time, flexible workplace arrangements, and childcare and elder-care needs, and through the provision of more comprehensive information to prospective candidates and new recruits on spouse employment opportunities and the expansion of gender-sensitivity training in all departments and offices. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to develop further the policy against harassment, including sexual harassment, and to issue clear, detailed guidelines for its application at Headquarters and in the field.

5. Due to the short time period between the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly and the opening of the forty-fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the present report updates information contained in the reports of the Secretary-General on the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat (A/54/405) and the composition of the Secretariat (A/54/279). The report includes the latest statistics on the representation of women and men in the Secretariat as well as information on the work programme for the year 2000.

II. Statistical update

Gender distribution of staff at the Professional and higher levels in the United Nations Secretariat

6. The gender distribution of all staff in the Professional and higher categories with appointments of one year or more is provided in table 1. The table includes staff on appointments subject to geographical distribution, staff with special language requirements, and staff on appointments limited to service with a particular office, mission, fund or programme. The latter two groups of staff are not subject to the system of desirable ranges used as a guideline for estimating the comparative representation of the nationals of each Member State. The gender distribution of Professional and higher-level staff in the smaller population of staff on geographical appointments is provided in table 2.

7. The statistics on the status of women in the Secretariat continue to show slow but steady improvement. Since 1 January 1999, the percentage of women on appointments subject to geographical distribution increased from 37.7 per cent to 38.6 per cent. As of 30 November 1999, there were 951 women out of a total of 2,463 staff on geographical appointments, as compared to 905 women out of a total of 2,401 staff on geographical appointments on 31 December 1998 (see table 3). Although the rate of progress in improving women's overall representation remains slow, headway has been made in improving the representation of women at the senior and policy-making levels, particularly at the D-1 level. The number of women at that level increased from 64 in December 1998 to 72 in November 1999, corresponding to an increase in women's representation on geographical appointments at the D-1 level from 31.7 per cent to 34.4 per cent. Since the submission of the Secretary-General's Strategic Plan of Action for the Improvement of the Status of Women in the Secretariat (1995-2000)[2] in November 1994, the percentage of women on geographical appointments at the D-1 level and above has risen from 15.1 per cent to 29.7 per cent, an increase of 14.6 percentage points compared to a 6.0-percentage-point increase over the same period in women's overall representation.

8. In the larger population of staff on appointments of one year or more, the increase in the percentage of women has also been small, rising from 35.5 per cent in December 1998 to 36.1 per cent in November 1999 (see table 4). The largest percentage increases (excluding the very small population of staff at the P-1 level) in the representation of women have been at the P-5, D-1 and D-2 levels. At the P-5 level, the percentage of women reached a critical mass, rising from 29.4 per cent to 30.5 per cent. During this period, the percentage of women at the D-1 level and above on appointments of one year or more increased from 23.2 per cent to 24.5 per cent.

Gender distribution of staff at the Professional and higher levels in organizations of the United Nations common system

9. Pursuant to the General Assembly's request in its resolution 53/119, statistics on the gender distribution of Professional and higher-level staff in all organizations of the United Nations common system, as of 31 December 1997, were submitted to the General Assembly (A/54/405, annex). The statistics were provided by the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ), which issues annual statistics on the staff of United Nations system organizations. CCAQ is currently validating the personnel statistics of the organizations, as of 31 December 1998, for publication in the spring of 2000. Gender distribution statistics for staff in all organizations of the United Nations common system, as at 31 December 1998, will also be included in the Secretary-General's report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session.

10. The Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) reviewed progress in meeting gender-equality goals at its session in October 1999. Although a number of organizations had made significant strides in reaching the goal of gender balance, it was agreed that much remained to be done to retain women in the service of the organizations by improving career opportunities and conditions of service. It was noted, for example, that many of the measures benefiting women being promoted by the system at the national level, such as access to childcare and flexible working arrangements, were not being extended to United Nations staff members. One of the major issues needing to be addressed in order to increase the representation of women was spouse employment. It was hoped that the Participating Agencies Mobility

System (PAMS), developed by the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ) and the Information Systems Coordinating Committee of ACC, would, *inter alia*, facilitate the employment of spouses. PAMS (http://pams.unsystem.org) provides an easy and effective way for interested staff members and their spouses or "significant others" to submit their curricula vitae for consideration by United Nations organizations. A related issue required review — that of duty-station agreements with Member States hosting United Nations organizations. In some cases, those agreements did not allow for spouse employment.

11. In May 1999, the Secretary-General decided that the United Nations Secretariat would voluntarily deduct from the salaries of staff members in default of court-ordered family support payments the funds owed and pay them to the spouse and/or children (ST/SGB/1999/4). The members of ACC felt that this policy should be fully implemented on a system-wide basis.

III. Work programme for 2000

12. During 2000, priority will be assigned to the further elaboration and implementation of gender action plans in individual departments and offices. The plans will build upon the objectives contained in the action plans on human resource management agreed upon jointly by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management and heads of departments and offices for the period 1999-2001. In January 2000, the Secretary-General wrote to all of the heads of departments and offices to request their cooperation in the design and implementation of the plans and their complete support in ensuring that women candidates are identified and given the fullest consideration for upcoming vacancies, in accordance with the revised special measures for the achievement of gender equality (ST/AI/1999/9). The Secretary-General also reviewed the record of each department and office in selecting women candidates for vacant posts and requested heads of departments and offices to ensure that the performance of managers in improving gender balance was a critical factor in their appraisal.

13. Other elements of the Secretary-General's strategy for the achievement of gender equality in the Secretariat, to be pursued in the coming year, include identification of external recruitment sources and development of recruitment strategies to identify and attract suitably qualified women candidates, particularly in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, in Member States that are unrepresented or under-represented in the Secretariat, and in occupations in which women are presently under-represented; development of mechanisms effectively to encourage, monitor and assess the performance of programme managers in meeting targets for improving women's representation; the further elaboration of policies and practices to support the reconciliation of staff members' work and family responsibilities with the aim of attracting and retaining the best qualified staff; and the review and further development of the Organization's policy against harassment, including sexual harassment.

Notes

[1] ST/AI/1999/9.

[2] A/49/587.

Table 1

Gender distribution of all Professional and higher-level staff with appointments of one year or more in the United Nations Secretariat, by department or office and by grade, as of 30 November 1999

Department/ Office	USG		ASG		D-2		D-1		P-5		P-4		P-3		P-2		P-1		Total		GRAND TOTAL	Percent Women
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
dm/ohrm				1	2	1	2	3	8	11	11	12	6	10	2	5			31	43	**74**	58.1%
dm	1				1		2	2	6	5	3	5	1	1		3			14	16	**30**	53.3%
dpi	1				4	1	8	9	22	11	36	34	28	41	23	26			122	122	**244**	50.0%
regcom								1	1										1	1	**2**	50.0%
unfip					1					1	2	2							3	3	**6**	50.0%
ocha			1		3	1	3		10	4	7	6	10	12		8			34	31	**65**	47.7%
dm/oppba			1		4		2	3	6	5	18	17	16	16	7	6			54	47	**101**	46.5%
ohchr		1			1		2	1	7	7	15	4	16	18	6	9			47	40	**87**	46.0%
ola	1		1		3		4	4	11	6	9	7	10	11	4	7			43	35	**78**	44.9%
desa	1		1	1	7	4	21	8	30	25	43	39	33	23	15	13			151	113	**264**	42.8%
unjspf			1		1		1	1	7	2	8	6	5	7	1	1			24	17	**41**	41.5%
osg	1	1	2	1	3	2	5	1	3	2	4	2	2	4		1			20	14	**34**	41.2%
dgaacs	1		1		3		8	5	60	40	129	74	115	89	11	18			328	226	**554**	40.8%
escwa	1					1	7		14	5	21	5	6	15	4	7			53	33	**86**	38.4%
interorg					2		3		2	1	1	3	1	2	1				10	6	**16**	37.5%
dda	1				1		1		2	5	5	3	3		2	1			15	9	**24**	37.5%
unog	1				1	1	6	5	32	24	76	48	81	28	13	15			210	121	**331**	36.6%
odccp	1				2		7	2	25	3	20	10	18	21	3	7			76	43	**119**	36.1%
dpa	1		2		5	2	7	7	19	7	20	9	9	9	5	4			68	38	**106**	35.8%
uncc			1		2		4		2	3	9	7	33	11	17	16		1	68	38	**106**	35.8%
eclac	1				1		7	5	13	5	34	16	25	15	22	11			103	52	**155**	33.5%
unscom								1	1	1	3								4	2	**6**	33.3%
oios	1					1	3	2	6	3	19	10	10	4	7	3			46	23	**69**	33.3%
osrsgcac	1				1						2	1	2	2					6	3	**9**	33.3%
unov					1	1	2	2	10	4	32	12	15	10	4	3			64	32	**96**	33.3%
unon							2		3	1	20	8	16	9	6	5			47	23	**70**	32.9%
dm/ocss			1		2		4	1	13	5	27	11	27	14	9	6			83	37	**120**	30.8%
unep	1		1		7	1	22	3	39	6	53	21	30	26	8	13		1	161	71	**232**	30.6%
unchs					1		1		6	2	14	4	9	5	1	3			32	14	**46**	30.4%
dpko	1		2		4		10	2	12	6	38	14	34	16	5	8			106	46	**152**	30.3%
escap	1					1	8	2	20	1	39	12	25	14	7	12			100	42	**142**	29.6%
ece	1					1	6	2	15	5	19	5	24	10	10	6			75	29	**104**	27.9%
unctad	1		1		3	2	11	1	33	8	37	10	37	22	16	8			139	51	**190**	26.8%
unoip	1				1				3		3	4	3	1	3				14	5	**19**	26.3%
eca	1					1	6	3	25	5	31	10	34	13	16	8			113	40	**153**	26.1%
dpkofald	4		9		10	1	19	1	41	4	89	24	108	46	52	35	2	5	334	116	**450**	25.8%
srsg																			0	0	**0**	0.0%
Total	25	2	25	3	77	22	194	77	507	223	897	455	792	525	280	268	2	7	2799	1582	4381	36.1%

Source: Human Resources Planning and Management Information System Service

Table 2

Gender distribution of all Professional and higher-level staff with appointments subject to geographical distribution in the United Nations Secretariat, by department or office and by grade, as of 30 November 1999

Department/ Office	USG		ASG		D-2		D-1		P-5		P-4		P-3		P-2		P-1		Total		Grand Total	% of Women
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
unscom								1											0	1	1	100.0 %
unoip	1								1			2		1					2	3	5	60.0 %
dm/ohrm				1	2	1	2	3	8	11	10	12	6	8	2	5			30	41	71	57.7 %
dm	1				1		2	2	5	5	2	5	1	1		2			12	15	27	55.6 %
dpi	1				4	1	8	9	21	11	36	34	27	41	23	25			120	121	241	50.2 %
ocha			1		3	1	2		7	3	5	4	5	9		6			23	23	46	50.0 %
regcom								1	1										1	1	2	50.0 %
unjspf					1		1	1	5	2	7	6	3	5		1			17	15	32	46.9 %
dm/oppba			1		4		2	3	6	5	18	16	12	12	6	6			49	42	91	46.2 %
dgaacs	1		1		3		8	5	8	3	4	7	4	6	1	4			30	25	55	45.5 %
unog	1				1		5	5	7	7	10	9	20	12	10	12			54	45	99	45.5 %
dpko	1		2		4		6	2	5	6	10	9	10	11	5	7			43	35	78	44.9 %
ohchr		1			1		2	1	7	6	13	4	14	17	6	6			43	35	78	44.9 %
unep	1				1		1		3	2	2	2		3	2	1			10	8	18	44.4 %
desa	1		1	1	7	3	20	8	29	25	43	39	33	23	14	13			148	112	260	43.1 %
ola	1		1		3		4	4	11	6	8	6	10	9	4	5			42	30	72	41.7 %
osg	1	1	2	1	2	2	5		3	2	3	1	1	4		1			17	12	29	41.4 %
escwa	1					1	7		14	5	19	5	4	14	4	7			49	32	81	39.5 %
dpa	1		2		3	2	7	7	16	7	17	9	8	9	4	3			58	37	95	38.9 %
dda	1				1		1		2	5	5	3	3		2	1			15	9	24	37.5 %
interorg					1				2			1	1	2	1				5	3	8	37.5 %
odccp	1				2		2	1	9	1	9	7	10	9	3	3			36	21	57	36.8 %
oios	1						2	2	4	2	13	7	6	4	7	3			33	18	51	35.3 %
unov					1	1	2	2	6	2	9	3	4	3	4	3			26	14	40	35.0 %
unfip					1					1	1								2	1	3	33.3 %
eclac	1				1		7	5	11	5	34	14	23	13	21	10			98	47	145	32.4 %
unon							1		1	1	4	1	4		1	3			11	5	16	31.3 %
escap	1					1	8	2	19	1	33	10	16	12	7	11			84	37	121	30.6 %
unchs							1		5	2	9	3	7	3	1	2			23	10	33	30.3 %
dm/ocss			1		2		4	1	11	5	25	9	17	8	9	5			69	28	97	28.9 %
eca	1					1	6	3	25	5	29	9	30	12	13	8			104	38	142	26.8 %
ece	1					1	6	2	15	5	19	5	23	7	9	6			73	26	99	26.3 %
unctad	1		1		3	2	11	1	33	8	37	10	35	20	16	7			137	48	185	25.9 %
dpkofald	1					1	4	1	11	1	10	2	13	7	4	1			43	13	56	23.2 %
osrsgcac											1		1						2	0	2	00.0 %
uncc			1		1				1										3	0	3	00.0 %
Total	21	2	14	3	53	18	137	72	312	150	445	254	351	285	179	167			1512	951	2463	38.6 %

Source: Human Resources Planning and Management Information System Service

Table 3
Comparison of the gender distribution of Professional and higher-level staff on appointments subject to geographical distribution, as of 31 December 1998, 30 June 1999 and 30 November 1999

	31 December 1998			*30 June 1999*			*30 November 1999*		
Level	*Men*	*Women*	*% women*	*Men*	*Women*	*% women*	*Men*	*Women*	*% women*
USG	22	2	8.3	21	2	8.7	21	2	8.7
ASG	14	3	17.6	14	3	17.6	14	3	17.6
D-2	53	16	23.2	53	16	23.2	53	8	25.4
D-1	138	64	31.7	136	71	34.3	137	72	34.4
P-5	311	141	31.2	310	143	31.6	312	150	32.5
P-4	421	247	37.0	440	254	36.6	445	254	36.3
P-3	360	265	42.4	346	275	44.3	351	285	44.8
P-2	177	167	48.5	171	155	47.5	179	167	48.3
P-1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	**1 496**	**905**	**37.7**	**1 491**	**919**	**38.1**	**1 512**	**951**	**38.6**

Source: Human Resources Planning and Management Information System Service.

Table 4
Comparison of the gender distribution of Professional and higher-level staff with appointments of one year or more, as of 31 December 1998, 30 June 1999 and 30 November 1999

	31 December 1998			*30 June 1999*			*30 November 1999*		
Level	*Men*	*Women*	*% women*	*Men*	*Women*	*% women*	*Men*	*Women*	*% women*
USG	28	4	12.5	29	3	9.4	25	2	7.4
ASG	25	5	16.7	24	4	14.3	25	3	10.7
D-2	71	19	21.1	69	19	21.6	77	22	22.2
D-1	193	68	26.1	194	76	28.1	194	77	28.4
P-5	485	202	29.4	495	212	30.0	507	223	30.5
P-4	871	428	32.9	894	454	33.7	897	455	33.7
P-3	769	502	39.5	777	508	39.5	792	525	39.9
P-2	273	261	48.9	278	259	48.2	280	268	48.9
P-1	4	9	69.2	2	7	77.8	2	7	77.8
Total	**2 719**	**1 498**	**35.5**	**2 762**	**1 542**	**35.8**	**2 799**	**1 582**	**36.1**

Source: Human Resources Planning and Management Information System Service.